

C 4. (Amended) An optical disk cartridge according to Claim 1, wherein projections for narrowing a width of said reading and writing windows are formed on a juncture between said clamping windows and said reading and writing windows.

- - REMARKS - -

Claims 1-4 are pending in the application. Claims 1-4 have been rewritten. The changes to the rewritten claims from the previous versions to the rewritten versions are shown in Appendix A (attached hereto as Tab A), with brackets for deleted matter and underlines for added matter. No new matter has been added as a result of this amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, claim 4 has been objected to for certain informalities. In particular, the Examiner has indicated that the second instance of "clamping" in line 4 should be --writing--. The claim has been amended accordingly.

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1-2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,175,726 to Imokawa ("Imokawa"). Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Imokawa. Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Imokawa in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,166,922 to Akiyama et al. ("Akiyama"). The rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) are respectfully traversed. The claims have nevertheless been amended further define the invention and to eliminate any ambiguity that may have been the basis for the rejections.

Independent claim 1 is directed to an optical disk cartridge comprising a casing having a pair of walls for accommodating an optical disk therein. The walls of the casing each comprise a clamping window for clamping the disk at the central portion thereof, and a reading and writing window for reading information from said disk and writing information on to said disk. The reading and writing window extends from the perimeter of the clamping window to a side edge of the casing. In addition, claim 1 requires that the lateral width of the clamping windows, as measured along a line intersecting the rotational axis of said optical disk and parallel to the sliding direction of the shutter, be shorter than the longitudinal length of the clamping windows, as

measured along a line intersecting the rotational axis of the optical disk and orthogonal to the sliding direction of the shutter. In other words, and as shown in the preferred embodiment depicted in Fig. 11 of the present application, the overall width "H" of the clamping window is less than its length "G". As set forth in detail in the specification of the present application, these dimensional parameters provide for an improved clamping of the optical disc while eliminating interference during the clamping operation. These dimensional parameters also make it possible to reduce the width of the shutter closing the reading and writing windows, including the clamping windows, as well as permitting a reduction in the size of the disk cartridge. These features and limitations are neither disclosed nor suggested by the prior art.

Imokawa appears to disclose a disk cartridge casing having a clamping window with a configuration similar to that of the prior art disclosed in the background section of the present application. In particular, and as shown in Fig. 6 of Imokawa, the clamping window clearly has an opening of equal width and length. In other words, the clamping window disclosed in Imokawa has a circular shape with a constant radius as measured from center of the disk. The overall width of the clamping window (as measured horizontally in Fig. 6) is therefore equal to the length of the clamping window (as measured vertically in Fig. 6). Accordingly, Imokawa fails to disclose or suggest the limitations of claim 1 requiring that the horizontal width of the clamping window, as measured along a line intersecting the rotational axis of said optical disk and parallel to the sliding direction of the shutter, be shorter than the vertical length of the clamping window, as measured along a line intersecting the rotational axis of the optical disk and orthogonal to the sliding direction of the shutter.

Akiyama appears to disclose a disk cartridge casing having a clamping window with a configuration similar to that disclosed in Imokawa. In particular, Akiyama appears to disclose a clamping window having a circular shape with a constant radius as measured from center of the disk. Consequently, Akiyama likewise fails to disclose the same limitations of claim 1 discussed above.

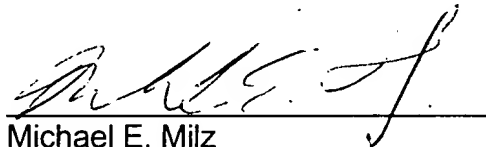
In other words, both Imokawa and Akiyama disclose clamping windows that are opened in a circular shape, and that are connected to the reading and writing windows. Thus, these references neither describe nor suggest a construction for a disk cartridge

in which the lateral size along the sliding direction of the shutter passing through the center of rotation at each of the clamping windows, under the state where the reading and writing windows are not connected, is formed to be shorter than a longitudinal size crossing at a right angle with the sliding direction of the shutter.

Accordingly, independent claim 1 is not rendered unpatentable by these prior art references, either alone or in combination. Claims 2-4 are each dependent on claim 1, and are therefore patentable for the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable. It is consequently unnecessary to discuss the additional reasons why these dependent claims are patentable.

Applicant has made a novel and nonobvious contribution to the art of optical disc devices. The pending claims are believed to truly distinguish over the prior art and to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, such allowance is now earnestly requested. If for any reason the Examiner is not able to allow the application, he is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4273.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael E. Milz", is written over a horizontal line.

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Appendix A

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1-4 as follows:

1. (Amended) An optical disk cartridge comprising a casing having a pair of walls for accommodating an optical disk therein;

wherein said walls of the casing [are formed with] each comprise a clamping window[s] for clamping said disk at the central portion[s] thereof, and [are formed with] a reading and writing window[s] for reading information from said disk and writing information on to said disk, said reading and writing window extending from a perimeter of said clamping window[s] to a side edge[s] of said casing;

wherein a shutter capable of opening and closing each of said clamping windows and each of said reading and writing windows is slidably provided[,] on said casing; and

wherein a [the horizontal size] lateral width of each of said clamping windows as measured along a line intersecting a rotational axis of said optical disk and parallel to a sliding direction of said shutter is formed shorter than [the vertical size thereof] a longitudinal length of said clamping windows as measured along a line intersecting said rotational axis of said optical disk and orthogonal to the sliding direction of said shutter.

2. (Amended) An optical disk cartridge according to Claim 1, wherein the width of each of said clamping windows is defined [are formed] by a pair of opposing linear [parts opposing along] portions extending orthogonal to the sliding direction of said shutter, and the length of each of said clamping windows is defined by arcuate [parts] portions connected to [connecting] said linear [parts] portions; and

wherein a distance between said linear [parts] portions is shorter than a diameter of said arcuate [parts] portions.

3. (Amended) An optical disk cartridge according to Claim 2, wherein the diameter of said arcuate [parts] portions of each of said clamping windows is ± 2 mm of 27.4 mm.

4. (Amended) An optical disk cartridge according to Claim 1, wherein projections for narrowing [the] a width of said reading and writing windows are formed on [the border of] a juncture between said clamping windows and said reading and [clamping] writing windows.